The Criteria for Evaluating Kindergarten-Through-Grade-Eight Foreign Language Instructional Materials

These criteria evaluate the alignment of instructional materials with the Language Learning Continuum, the content of the framework, and the quality of those materials in the areas of program organization, assessment, universal access, and instructional planning and support. They will guide the development and govern the adoption cycle of kindergarten-through-grade-eight instructional materials beginning in 2003. They do not recommend or require one particular pedagogical approach. The numerical order of the criteria within each category does not imply relative importance; all criteria must be addressed. They may also be used by publishers and local

educational agencies as a guide for the development and selection of instructional materials for grades nine through twelve.

These criteria are organized into five categories:

1. **Curriculum Content:** The content as specified in the *Foreign Language Framework*

2. **Program Organization:** The sequence and the organization of the foreign language program

3. **Assessment:** The strategies presented in the instructional materials for measuring what students know and are able to do

4. **Universal Access**: The information and ideas that address the needs of special student populations, including students eligible for special education, advanced students, students who are studying a heritage language, and students whose achievement in reading/language arts is either below or above that typical of the class or grade level

5. **Instructional Planning and Support:** The instructional planning and support information and materials, typically including a separate edition specially designed for use by the teacher, that assist teachers in the implementation of the foreign language program

Foreign language materials must support teaching aligned with the framework. Materials that fail to meet the foreign language content criteria will not be considered satisfactory for adoption. Only those programs determined to meet criterion category 1 need to be evaluated under criteria categories 2 through 5.

In an effort to create focused foreign language instructional materials, publishers are asked to concentrate on the content as described in the framework.

Extraneous content is fundamentally contrary to and detracts from the ability of teachers to teach readily and students to learn thoroughly the content specified by the Language Learning Continuum and the *Foreign Language Framework.*

Criteria Category 1: Foreign Language Content/Alignment with Curriculum

Instructional materials support teaching and learning the skills and knowledge called for at the different stages as outlined in the Language Learning Continuum and that are appropriate for the designated grade levels. Materials are fully aligned with the content of the framework. The materials must facilitate and enable students to communicate in the language. Programs with consistent inaccuracies and a large number of errors will not be considered for adoption.

To be considered suitable for adoption, instructional materials in foreign language will provide:

1. A list of evidence, with page numbers and/or other appropriate references, that demonstrates alignment with the stage(s) of the Language Learning Continuum

2. All content as specified at each stage of the continuum that is supported by topics or concepts, lessons, activities, examples, and/or illustrations, and so forth as appropriate

3. Accurate content to support foreign language instruction in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing

4. Foreign language content that is presented in interesting and engaging ways to students

5. Grammar and vocabulary appropriately used and accurately defined

6. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities in a foreign language that are grammatically accurate and culturally appropriate

7. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing opportunities in a foreign language through direct instruction and activities, such as conversations, reading and writing assignments, and listening exercises and essays, that focus on the student's improving and demonstrating proficiency

8. Instruction that is culturally appropriate and develops listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a foreign language

9. Opportunities for students to increase their knowledge and understanding of a foreign language through the study of the literature, art, history, philosophy, and culture(s)

10. Opportunities for students to use technology to practice communication in the language and access information about the language

11. Practice in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities that improve language proficiency and lead to student attainment of the designated stage of the Language Learning Continuum

12. Materials that enable students to communicate in the language

Criteria categories 2 through 5 shall be considered after a program has been determined to have the necessary content. A program meeting criteria categories 2 through 5 will be approved, and a program failing to meet one category of the criteria will not be approved.

Criteria Category 2: Program Organization

Sequential organization of the foreign language program provides structure related to what students should learn each year and allows teachers to convey the foreign language content efficiently and effectively. The program will be well organized and presented in a manner consistent with providing all students an opportunity to achieve the essential knowledge and skills described in the Language Learning Continuum. A program must designate which stage(s) of the Language Learning Continuum is/are being addressed.

To be considered suitable for adoption, instructional materials in foreign language must provide:

1. Instructional resources, aligned with the Language Learning Continuum, that introduce new knowledge and skills at a reasonable pace and depth of coverage and explicitly prepare students for later stage(s)

2. A logical and coherent structure that facilitates efficient and effective teaching and learning within a lesson, unit,

and year aligned with the Language Learning Continuum

3. Clearly stated student outcomes and goals that are measurable and framework-based

4. An overview of the content in each chapter or unit that designates how the lesson supports the Language Learning Continuum

5. A well-organized structure that provides students with the opportunity to listen, speak, read, and write in the language and build on knowledge and skills obtained through other language studies and/or immersion

6. Activities and texts that organize the content in a logical way such that prerequisite skills and knowledge are developed before the more complex concepts and understandings that depend on them

7. Tables of contents, indexes, glossaries, content summaries, and assessment guides that are designed to help teachers, parents or guardians, and students

Criteria Category 3: Assessment

Assessment should measure what students know and are able to do. Instructional resources should contain multiple measures to assess students' progress. Assessment measures should reveal students' knowledge and understanding of the language. Assessment tools that publishers include as a part of their instructional material should provide evidence of students' progress toward meeting the proficiency levels of the Language Learning Continuum. Assessment tools should provide information teachers can use in planning and modifying instruction to help all students meet or exceed the profi-

ciency levels for the designated stage of the Language Learning Continuum.

To be considered suitable for adoption, instructional materials in foreign language must provide:

1. Strategies or instruments teachers can use to determine students' prior knowledge

2. Multiple measures of the individual student's progress at regular intervals to evaluate his or her attainment of the appropriate stage

3. Guiding questions for monitoring students' comprehension when listening, speaking, reading, and writing

4. Performance assessments and accompanying rubrics that can be used to evaluate and improve the quality of students' work

Criteria Category 4: Universal Access

Instructional materials should provide access to the curriculum for all students, including those with special needs: advanced learners, heritage language learners, students with learning difficulties, and special education students. Programs must conform to the policies of the State Board of Education as well as other applicable state and federal guidelines pertaining to diverse populations and students with special needs.

To be considered suitable for adoption, instructional materials in foreign language must provide:

1. Suggestions based on current and confirmed research for ways to adapt the curriculum and the instruction to meet students' identified special needs

2. Strategies to help students who are below grade level in reading/language arts understand the foreign language content

3. Suggestions for advanced learners that allow students to study content in greater depth

4. Strategies and suggestions to help heritage language learners to learn and understand all aspects of the language

Criteria Category 5: Instructional Planning and Support

Teacher support materials should be built into the instructional materials and should specify suggestions and illustrative examples of how teachers can use the Language Learning Continuum. Assistance should be designed to help teachers implement the program in a way that ensures the opportunity for all students to learn the essential skills and knowledge called for in the curriculum. These criteria do not recommend or require one particular pedagogical approach. Publishers should make recommendations to teachers regarding instructional approaches that fit the instructional goals. Programs should provide teachers with a variety of instructional approaches that might include, but are not limited to, direct instruction, assigned reading and writing, conversations with native speakers, and presentations of authentic and accurate cultural situations.

To be considered suitable for adoption, planning and support resources in foreign language must provide:

1. Clearly written and accurate explanations of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the language being studied

2. Strategies to address and correct common student errors

3. A variety of pedagogical strategies for flexible grouping of students

4. Lesson plans and suggestions for organizing resources in the classroom and ideas for pacing lessons

5. A list of materials that support the Language Learning Continuum

6. Suggestions and information on how to use authentic and accurate conversations and written communications to promote instruction in the language

7. Suggestions for how to use student assessment data within the program for instructional planning purposes

8. Technical support and suggestions for appropriate use of audiovisual, multimedia, and information technology resources associated with a unit

9. Suggestions for activities and strategies to inform parents or guardians about the foreign language program

10. References and resources for the teacher to provide further study of the language

11. Demonstration of electronic resources for teachers (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes, and other electronic media) that depict appropriate techniques and teaching suggestions

12. Homework assignments that support classroom learning and are written so that parents or guardians who are knowledgeable of the language can easily help their children

13. Suggestions that are tied to the Language Learning Continuum and that allow students to study content in greater depth

14. Teacher's editions that include ample and useful annotations and suggestions on how to present the content in the student edition and ancillary materials